

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BOGOTA 05515 131257Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-02 ICA-20 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 /069 W

-----040257 131401Z /64

R 122044Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8472

UNCLAS BOGOTA 5515

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SOPN, CO, US

SUBJECT: PUBLIC OPINION AND INFORMATION: FAVORABLE PRESS
REACTION TO AMBASSADOR VAKY'S APPOINTMENT

1. THE INFLUENTIAL LIBERAL DAILY "EL TIEMPO", IN AN EDITORIAL OF JUNE 10, 1978, ENTITLED "A WISE NOMINATION", COMMENTS POSITIVELY ON THE APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR VAKY AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LATIN AFFAIRS, AND PRAISES THE AMBASSADOR AS THE PROPER PERSON FOR THE JOB. AN UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF THE EDITORIAL FOLLOWS.

2. BEGIN TEXT: THE POLICY OF PRESIDENT CARTER TOWARD LATIN AMERICA, FLUCTUATING BETWEEN UTOPIAN PROPOSALS AND A FRANK IGNORANCE OF REALITY, HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY APPOINTMENTS WHICH ARE NOT ALWAYS FITTING IN REGARD TO THE PERSONS CHARGED WITH DIRECTING THE FRIENDLY INTERCHANGE AMONG THE NATIONS WHICH MAKE UP OUR HEMISPHERE. FOR THIS REASON, THE APPOINTMENT OF VIRON VAKY AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INTERAMERICAN AFFAIRS IS UNDOUBTEDLY APPROPRIATE. AMBASSADOR VAKY WAS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES IN COLOMBIA FOR A LONG TIME, AND, LATER, REPLACED TERENCE TODMAN IN VENEZUELA (SIC). THE COMPLEX GAMUT OF LATIN AMERICAN PROBLEMS IS WELL KNOWN BY AMBASSADOR VAKY. OF IMPORTANCE IS NOT ONLY THIS KNOWLEDGE OF THE DIVERSE ASPECTS OF THE REGIONAL LIFE, BUT UNCLASSIFIED

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ALSO HIS MANNER OF HARMONIZING WITH THEM, STUDYING THEM, AND SEEKING WITH REAL INTEREST SOLUTIONS INTENDED ALWAYS, TO PUT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND LATIN ON A PLANE OF EQUALITY AND UNDERSTANDING. THOSE WHO KNEW HIM WELL DURING THE TIME THAT HE HEADED THE EMBASSY IN BOGOTA, KNOW THE INTELLIGENT AND STRICT FORM IN WHICH HE CARRIED OUT HIS MISSION. MORE SO, IF IT IS RECALLED THAT

IN THOSE DAYS THE DIFFICULT SOLUTION TO THE PANAMA CANAL PROBLEM, A MATTER IN WHICH COLOMBIA PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN BRINGING IT TO A GOOD END, BEGAN TO DEVELOP. AMBASSADOR VAKY UNDERSTOOD FULLY THE ROLE WHICH HE COULD DEVELOP AS A MEDIATOR, AND MUCH IN THE FINAL AGREEMENTS IS OWED TO HIS EFFORTS.

IT CAN BE SAID, WITHOUT FEAR OF EQUIVOCATION, THAT VIRON VAKY WAS-AND IS-THE APPROPRIATE PERSON FOR THIS VERY POSITION, BECAUSE OF HIS INTELLIGENCE AND HIS DILIGENT AMERICANIST FERVOR. WE LATIN AMERICANS CONGRATULATE OURSELVES THAT IT IS HE WHO HAS RISEN TO THE MOST IMPORTANT POSITION IN THE NORTH AMERICAN HIERARCHY IN REGARD TO RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA. IN VAKY, WE FIND A PERSON WHO PROFOUNDLY UNDERSTANDS THE LATIN AMERICAN REALITY, AS WELL AS AN UNDERSTANDING AND GREAT CITIZEN AND GOOD FRIEND OF COLOMBIA. VIRON VAKY CAN REALIZE SO MANY AND SUCH GOOD THINGS FROM HIS NEW POSITION, THAT WE MUST CONGRATULATE OURSELVES, AS COLOMBIANS AND LATIN AMERICANS, FOR THE ASTUTENESS OF PRESIDENT CARTER IN CHOOSING MR. TODMAN'S SUCCESSOR. END TEXT.

3. AMBASSADOR VAKY'S APPOINTMENT ALSO HAS BEEN COVERED ROUTINELY IN WIRE SERVICE STORIES. CLIPPINGS BEING POUCED TO EMBASSY CARACAS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, AMBASSADORS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BOGOTA05515
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780246-1013
Format: TEL
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780671/aaaacjie.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 81d9568b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2400015
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PUBLIC OPINION AND INFORMATION: FAVORABLE PRESS REACTION TO AMBASSADOR VAKY'S APPOINTMENT
TAGS: SOPN, CO, US, (VAKY, VIRON)
To: CARACAS
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/81d9568b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014